

(No. 27.)



1870.

T A S M A N I A .

WITHDRAWAL OF TROOPS.

DESPATCH OF SECRETARY OF STATE.

Laid upon the Table by the Colonial Treasurer, and ordered by the House to be printed, August 23, 1870.



TASMANIA.
No. 23.

Downing-street, 26th February, 1869.

SIR,

I TAKE the earliest opportunity of informing you that Her Majesty's Government propose at once to reduce the number of Troops in Tasmania to one Company; and that they have under consideration the question whether that Company, if retained, should not be paid for at the same rate as Troops stationed in other Australian Colonies.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,
GRANVILLE.

Governor DU CANE.

Colonial Secretary's Office, 22nd April, 1869.

MEMORANDUM.

IN returning Despatch No. 23, of 26th February, 1869, in which the Secretary of State informs Your Excellency that Her Majesty's Government propose at once to reduce the number of Troops in Tasmania to one Company, and that they have under consideration the question whether that Company, if retained, should not be paid for at the same rate as Troops stationed in other Australian Colonies, your Responsible Advisers desire most respectfully but most urgently to remonstrate against the reduction of the Troops in this Garrison, or any alteration of the terms upon which in accordance with the Circular Despatch of His Grace the Duke of Newcastle, under date 26th June, 1863, as amended by Circular Despatch of the 27th July, 1863, Her Majesty's Forces were stationed in this Colony.

Though the number of Imperial Convicts under sentence at Port Arthur has been considerably reduced, the men remaining there, for the most part, are of the worst character.

With reference to such of these men as are detained under sentences for life, the Civil Commandant has, in his last Report, pointed out to Your Excellency that it has become expedient to announce to them the decision of the Government, and that some special system of treatment will be necessary for their safe custody, without which he fears that "some serious disturbance or perhaps catastrophe will follow such announcement."

It is evident, therefore, that the same causes which have hitherto rendered necessary the presence of a disciplined force, operate as strongly now as at the date of the Despatch of His Grace the Duke of Newcastle, as, although the Military are stationed in Hobart Town, they would, in the event of a successful rising at Port Arthur, be available to prevent the Convicts from reaching the settled Districts.

(Signed)

R. DRY.
THOS. D. CHAPMAN.
W. L. DOBSON.

His Excellency the Governor.

No. 32.
(Executive.)

Government House, Tasmania, 22nd April, 1869.

MY LORD,

I HAVE the honor to forward to Your Lordship a Memorandum addressed to me by my Responsible Advisers in reference to Your Lordship's Despatch of the 26th February last, informing me that Her Majesty's Government propose at once to reduce the number of Troops in Tasmania to one Company, and that they have further under consideration the question whether that Company should not be paid for at the same rate as Troops stationed in the other Australian Colonies.

2. Your Lordship will see from the Memorandum that my Responsible Advisers enter an urgent remonstrance against both these proposals.

3. In expressing my general concurrence with their views as regards the inexpediency of any permanent diminution of the Troops stationed here at the present time, I would call Your Lordship's attention to the language of the Duke of Newcastle's Circular Despatch of the 26th June, 1863, (Tasmania) in which the Force in Tasmania is fixed at three Companies; and His Grace further says, "The Force in Tasmania, where the effects of the old system of transportation are not yet worn out, will be maintained for the present at the expense of the old Government." These words have always been understood by this Colony as conveying a pledge on the part of Her Majesty's Government that, so long as the Convict Establishment at Port Arthur was maintained, the Troops would not be further permanently reduced; and more especially that, whatever the number of the Force stationed here, it would be maintained at the cost of the Mother Country.

4. It is perfectly true that the number of Convicts at Port Arthur are slowly diminishing year by year, but it cannot, I think, be fairly stated "that the effects of the old system of transportation are yet worn out," or even so far "worn out" as to justify the large diminution of the Force now proposed.

5. As this Memorandum points out, the men now remaining at Port Arthur are those for the most part of the very worst character. I may add, too, in reference to my Despatch to Your Lordship of the 24th of March last, that, while expressing my reluctance to sanction any additional expenditure at Port Arthur in order to deal with the cases of men sentenced for life, I certainly did not contemplate any immediate reduction of the Troops stationed at Hobart Town, but rather regarded them as an essential element for securing, in case of an outbreak, the complete isolation of the settlement on Tasman's Peninsula from the main land.

6. The withdrawal of the Troops too at this particular juncture, coupled with the further proposal for the cost of the remaining Company being defrayed at the expense of the Colony, is, I fear, certain to frustrate any attempt on my part to arrange with my Responsible Advisers the question of the future of Port Arthur on a satisfactory basis. It is by no means unlikely that the Colonial Government may make these proposals, if carried into execution, the plea for the withdrawal of all their Convicts to the Cascades Colonial Prison at Hobart Town, and thus leave the Imperial Government saddled with an establishment at Port Arthur out of all proportion to the numbers of Imperial Convicts alone, and in which, from the nature of the settlement and general character of Convict discipline, it will be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to make any material reduction.

7. Under these circumstances I would venture to ask Your Lordship to urge Her Majesty's Government to reconsider both these proposals, especially the last of them, the carrying out of which, I fear, looking to the language of the Duke of Newcastle's Despatch, will be regarded, so long as the Convict Settlement at Port Arthur is maintained, as tantamount to a breach of faith with the Colony.

I have the honor to be,
My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient humble Servant,
CHARLES DU CANE.

The Right Hon. the Earl GRANVILLE, K.G.
Colonial Office.

TASMANIA.
No. 60.

Downing-street, 21st October, 1869.

SIR,

I HAVE to acknowledge the receipt of your Despatch No. 32 of 22nd April, with a Memorandum from your Responsible Advisers on the subject of my Despatch of 26th February, in which I informed

you that Her Majesty's Government proposed to reduce the number of Troops in Tasmania to one Company, and that the question was under consideration whether that Company should not be paid for at the same rate as Troops stationed in the other Australian Colonies.

With regard to the passage which you quote from the Duke of Newcastle's Despatch of 26th June, 1863, as conveying a pledge that so long as the Convict Establishment at Port Arthur was maintained the Troops would not be further permanently reduced, and that they would be maintained at Imperial cost, I have to point out to you that the words "for the present" used by the Duke of Newcastle are totally incapable of the construction affixed to them by the Colony. Any pledge fairly deducible from these terms has been exhausted, or nearly so, by the gradual exhaustion of the Convicts; and if any allowance is equitably due to the Colony in respect of these persons, who will soon be reduced to 40 or 50, the retention of a Military Force is not a convenient mode of satisfying the claim.

You refer to the danger of breaking off the negotiation for the transfer to the Colony of the Imperial Establishment at Tasman's Peninsula, but that negotiation cannot come to any satisfactory result unless it be approached by both parties in a reasonable spirit. I hope that the Colonial Government will so approach it, but I cannot allow its existence to prevent Her Majesty's Government from doing what is necessary for the protection of Imperial interests. It is for the Colony to consider whether the effect of protracting negotiation has not been, and will not be, to injure its position in any final settlement.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,

Your most obedient humble Servant,
GRANVILLE.

Governor DU CANE.

Government House, 31st. January, 1870.

MEMORANDUM.

THE approaching departure of the two Companies of H. M. 2nd Battalion 14th Regt. for England, and their replacement by two Companies of H. M. 2nd Battalion 18th Regt., may be regarded as the first step towards the carrying out of the programme announced by Lord Granville in his Despatch of the 25th of March, 1869, with respect to the future distribution of Her Majesty's Troops among the British Colonies.

2. It will be in the recollection of my Advisers that in the Despatch above quoted the proportion proposed to be assigned to Tasmania was one Company, to be paid for after a period not distinctly named in the Despatch, but stated "to be close at hand," at the rate now agreed on for the other Australian Colonies. It was further stated that no fraction of a Regiment can be allotted to Australia; and while the respective Governments of the Australian Colonies were invited to endeavour to arrive amongst themselves at such an understanding as would enable Her Majesty's Government to station a Regiment in Australia, the Government of Tasmania was specially recommended to make itself a party to any such consultation.

3. In reply to Lord Granville's Despatch a Memorandum, to be forwarded to the Secretary of State, was addressed to me by my Responsible Advisers, protesting against the proposed diminution of the number of Companies hitherto assigned to Tasmania, and setting forth the claims of the Colony to a further continuation of the advantage hitherto conceded to it of receiving the services of Her Majesty's Troops without payment. That Memorandum was duly forwarded by me to the Secretary of State with a covering Despatch endorsing the views entertained by my Advisers. An unfavourable answer was, however, returned to my Despatch and the Memorandum by Lord Granville, dated the 21st of October last, and a renewed intimation given that the privilege of retaining the Troops without payment would be shortly withdrawn.

4. From the tone of Lord Granville's Despatch in answer, I fear that further remonstrance on this point may be regarded as certain to be unavailing. The time, therefore, appears to me to have fairly arrived when a definite decision should be come to (1) by the Australian Colonies generally as to the retention or otherwise of the Regiment proposed to be left in them, and (2) by each Colony in particular as to its willingness or otherwise, provided the Regiment be retained, to keep the Company or Companies proposed to be assigned to it on the terms of payment named by Lord Granville.

5. I would, therefore, urge upon my Responsible Advisers the expediency of taking into early consideration the latter of these two questions. If the Government of this Colony is unwilling, on mature deliberation, to pay for the retention of the single Company, it would appear to me, so far as Tasmania is concerned, unnecessary to discuss the larger question of the retention of the whole

Regiment amongst the Australian Colonies. If, on the other hand, it should be inclined individually to accept Lord Granville's proposal, the best method of consultation between the Colonies as to the general question will then be a subject for deliberation.

6. On the point of the general policy, I may say that the total rejection of Imperial Troops by the Australian Colonies at the present time appears to me to be a matter involving very grave and serious considerations, and I should certainly regret to see any individual Colony precluded from taking part in a general consultation of the Colonies on the entire question by a hasty decision to reject for itself Lord Granville's proposal.

CHARLES DU CANE.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary.

Colonial Secretary's Office, 18th February, 1870.

MEMORANDUM.

THE Colonial Secretary has the honor to acquaint the Governor that His Excellency's Memorandum, under date 31st January, 1870, on the subject of the future distribution of Her Majesty's Troops among the Australian Colonies, has received the careful consideration of His Excellency's Advisers.

Lord Granville's proposition amounts to an offer to allot one Regiment of the Line to Australia, and to station one Company of that Regiment in Tasmania, on terms of payment by the Colonies intimated in a previous Despatch.

His Excellency's Memorandum now invites Ministers to take into early consideration the advisability or otherwise of consenting to receive a single Company on the terms of payment named by Lord Granville.

His Excellency's Advisers conceive that no practical advantage can flow from the consideration of this question until a collective decision has been arrived at by the Australian Colonies on the larger question of the advisability or otherwise of accepting a Regiment of the Line on Lord Granville's terms.

His Excellency's Ministers have proposed to the Governments of Australia and New Zealand that a Conference should be held in Melbourne in May next on the question of Australian Commercial Federation and other questions of common Australasian concern. At that Conference the subject of the retention of Her Majesty's Troops on the terms offered by Lord Granville will, no doubt, form a prominent topic for joint deliberation.

The action of the Government of Tasmania must necessarily depend upon the collective determination of all the Colonies affected by Lord Granville's proposal.

His Excellency's Advisers deem it right on this occasion to reiterate the opinion so often urged upon the Imperial Government, that the claim of Tasmania to the presence of British Troops rests upon exceptional considerations which have no application to the case of any other Australian Colony.

Those claims may be ignored, or repudiated, but their justice cannot be denied.

JAMES MILNE WILSON.

His Excellency the Governor.

No. 9.

Government House, Tasmania, 23rd February, 1870.

MY LORD,

IN reference to Your Lordship's Confidential Despatch of the 30th of November, 1869, on the question of the retention of one Regiment of Imperial Troops in the Australian Colonies, I have the honor to inform Your Lordship that, on the 31st of January, I addressed a Memorandum to my Responsible Advisers in which I invited them to take into early consideration the advisability or otherwise of consenting to receive a single Company on the terms of the payment named by Your Lordship.

2. The views of my Responsible Advisers on this subject are embodied in a Memorandum addressed to me by the Colonial Secretary in reply to mine, which I enclose herewith, together with a copy of a Circular Letter addressed by the same Minister to the Governments of the Continental Colonies of Australia and New Zealand, proposing an Intercolonial Conference in Melbourne

in May next, on the subject of a Customs Union, Intercolonial Free Trade, and other questions of common Australasian interest. Amongst these questions the subject of the retention or otherwise of the Troops on the terms offered will, doubtless, form a prominent topic for deliberation; and my Advisers are of opinion that the consideration of the larger question of the acceptance or otherwise of the entire Regiment by the collective Colonies should precede that of the smaller one of the retention by Tasmania of a single Company.

3. As in the event of Victoria, New South Wales, and South Australia rejecting their proportion of the Regiment, the single Company would, as I understand Your Lordship's proposals, be no longer at the disposal of this Colony. I certainly think my Responsible Advisers are right in their view that the whole question should, if possible, be first considered by the Australian Colonies collectively. Should, however, their proposal for an Intercolonial Conference be rejected by the Colonies invited to take part in it, I shall again bring the subject before them, and press for a speedy decision as regards the single Company.

4. Your Lordship will observe that the Colonial Secretary in his Memorandum addressed to myself reiterates the opinion which I have endorsed in previous Despatches on the subject, "that the claim of Tasmania to the presence of British Troops rests upon exceptional considerations which have no application to the case of any other Australian Colony."

I have the honor to be,
My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient humble Servant.

CHARLES DU CANE.

*The Right Honorable the Earl GRANVILLE, K.G.,
Colonial Office.*

TASMANIA.
No. 15.

Downing-street, 19th May, 1870.

SIR,

WITH reference to the correspondence which has passed on the question of the retention of Imperial Troops in the Australian Colonies, I transmit to you a copy of a letter from the War Office, with one from the Horse Guards, respecting the return of the 2nd Battalion of the 18th Regiment.

Although Her Majesty's Government readily acknowledge the reciprocal duty of defending every portion of the Empire, and that a Colony which pays for the presence of Troops during peace may fairly expect that they should not be removed during war except under the strongest necessity, yet the exigencies of a state of war are so unexpected, and the necessity for entire freedom of action so great, that it would not be possible for them to give a pledge to that effect. But, independently of that consideration, they observe that the Governments of Victoria and Queensland decline British Troops, that Tasmania has not accepted them, and could not be expected to take any large number, that South Australia only desires a single Company, and New South Wales only four Companies.

Australia, therefore, will not be prepared to receive anything like a Regiment of Infantry, which is the smallest number that can be sent there consistently with the requirements of discipline.

His Royal Highness the Field Marshal Commanding in Chief has repeatedly expressed his opinion that Artillery cannot be permanently left in a Colony without Infantry. The removal of the 2-18th will therefore necessitate that of the Artillery.

The Troops may be withdrawn at the end of July or in the course of August. But if before their departure your Ministers can make arrangements with the Commanding Officer for the retention at the expense of the Colony of any Commissioned or Non-Commissioned Officers or Privates whose services they may desire to retain for purposes of instruction, military example, or otherwise, Her Majesty's Government will offer no objection.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,

Your most obedient humble Servant,

GRANVILLE.

Governor DU CANE.

(Copy.)

*Sir E. LUGARD to Sir F. ROGERS.**War Office, 26th March, 1870.*

SIR,

WITH reference to the correspondence that has passed upon the subject of the withdrawal of Imperial Troops from the Australian Colonies, I am directed by Mr. Secretary Cardwell to transmit to you, with a view to its being laid before Earl Granville, the enclosed copy of a letter from the Horse Guards, in which it is stated that Major-General Sir T. Chute had reported, under date the 31st January last, that the 2-18th Troop was then arriving in Australia (from New Zealand), and that the 2-14th would embark for England about the end of February, and that under those circumstances the Field Marshal Commanding in Chief presumes that the return home of the former Regiment might now be submitted for Her Majesty's approval.

It further appears from a private letter of the same date received from Sir T. Chute, that "the first detachment of the 2nd Battalion 18th Regiment had already arrived, and should ere this have relieved a detachment of about similar strength of the 14th Regiment at Adelaide."

Mr. Cardwell has expected to have received some time since the decision of the several Australian Colonies in regard to the retention of Her Majesty's Troops; but, looking to the distribution of force on which the Army Estimates and the Transport Vote are founded, it appears to him to be time that clear directions should be given to the Board of Admiralty to bring home all the Troops from those Colonies, and he proposes, with Lord Granville's concurrence, at once to convey such directions to the Admiralty.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) EDWARD LUGARD.

Sir F. ROGERS, Bart.

(Copy.)

*Lieut.-General FORSTER to Under Secretary of State, W. A.**Horse Guards, 24th March, 1870.*

SIR,

WITH reference to the 3rd paragraph of your letter of the 12th instant, I am directed by the Field Marshal Commanding in Chief to request that you will acquaint the Secretary of State for War that a letter, dated 31st January last, has been received from Major-General Sir T. Chute at Melbourne, in which it is stated that the 2nd Battalion 18th Regiment "is now arriving in Australia," and that the 2nd Battalion 14th Regiment would embark for England about the end of February.

Under these circumstances, His Royal Highness presumes that the return home of the 2nd Battalion 18th Foot may now be submitted to the Queen for Her Majesty's approval.

His Royal Highness will be glad to be informed when any further intelligence is received regarding the Battery of Artillery detained at Sydney.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) W. F. FORSTER.

The Under Secretary of State, War Office.

TASMANIA.

No. 16.

Downing-street, 20th May, 1870.

SIR,

I HAVE to acknowledge the receipt of your Despatch, No. 9, of 23rd February, forwarding a Memorandum from your Responsible Advisers on the question of the retention of a Company of Imperial Troops in Tasmania. The question of the retention of Her Majesty's Troops in Australia had already engaged the Government, and I need only refer you to my Despatch, No. 15, of the 19th instant, from which you will learn their decision, and the grounds on which it has been formed.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient humble Servant,

GRANVILLE.

Governor DU CANE.